

XXXIV.—*Notices of recent Ornithological Publications.**Bangs' recent papers.*

[Notes on a collection of Surinam Birds. By Outram Bangs and Thomas E. Penard. Bull. Mus. Comp. Zool., Cambridge, Mass., lxii. 1918, pp. 25-93.]

[Vertebrata from Madagascar. Aves. By Outram Bangs. Ibid. lxi. 1918, pp. 489-511.]

[Notes on the Geographical races of *Tangara gyroloides*. By Outram Bangs. Proc. New Engl. Zool. Club, vi. 1917, pp. 73-76.]

[Description of a new Woodpecker from Peru. By Outram Bangs and G. K. Noble. Ibid. pp. 85-86.]

In the first paper an extensive collection of nearly 2000 specimens, representing 301 species of birds, made in the vicinity of Paramaribo in Dutch Guiana for the Cambridge Museum is described by the two authors. After a short introduction describing the three zones—alluvial, savanna, and highlands—into which the country may be divided, a list of species follows with taxonomic remarks. A number of new forms from Surinam, as well as from other parts of South America, are described, viz. :—*Milvago chimachima cordata* Panama, *Rupornis magnirostris insidiatrix* Colombia, *Herpetotheres cachimans chapmani* Mexico, *Aranides cajanea latens* Panama, *Chæmepelia arthuri* Surinam, *Pulsatrix perspicillata trinitatis* Trinidad, *Ceophleus lineatus improcerus* Bahia, *Chætura brachyura prævelox* St. Vincent, *Lipaugus simplex frederici* Surinam, *Placostomus coronatus gunia* Surinam, *Pitangus lictor panamensis* Panama, *Troglodytes musculus paramaribensis* Surinam, *Stelgidopteryx ruficollis cacabutus* Surinam, *Ostinops viridis flavescens* Peruvian Amazons, *Tanagra olivacea mellea* Peru, *Sporophila minuta centralis* Panama, *Saltator olivascens brewsteri* Trinidad, *Myospiza humeralis tucumanensis* Argentina.

Two new genera are proposed, *Helicolestes* for *Falco hamatus* Illiger, and *Hypocnemoides* for *Hypocnemis melanopogon* ScL. In addition a number of old names are revived and recognized, and several changes made in present nomenclature.

The second paper deals with a collection of birds made

by Mr. F. R. Wulsin in Madagascar, consisting of 1065 skins belonging to 122 species and subspecies. Four of these are here described for the first time, namely, *Æna capensis aliena*, *Phalacrocorax africanus pictilis*, *Anhinga vulsini*, *Agapornis madagascariensis ablactanea*. The collection also contained four adult examples of *Monias benschi*, a curious form believed by Hartert to be allied to the Rails. Mr. Bangs, from the evidence of the powder-down patches, suggests a relationship to *Mesites*.

The Blue-rumped Tanager, *Calospiza* or *Tangara gyroloides*, has had a somewhat checkered career, so far as nomenclature is concerned. Mr. Bangs, in his third paper, discusses the taxonomic history of the species and recognizes four races, one of which, *T. g. nupera* from western Ecuador, is new; the type-locality of the type-species, following Hellmayr, is considered to be Colombia.

The last paper on the list explains itself. The new Woodpecker is named *Chrysoptilus atricollis lymani*, and was obtained in north-western Peru.

Beebe on the Pheasants.

[A monograph of the Pheasants by William Beebe. In four volumes. Vol. i. pp. i-1+1-190, 20 col. plates, 15 photogravures, 5 maps. London (Published under the auspices of the New York Zoological Society by Witherby & Co.), 1918: large 4to.]

The first volume of Capt. Beebe's long-promised work on the Pheasants is now before us. It is a most sumptuous production. The size, the illustrations, the paper, and the print are all of the very best that could be obtained, and the contents justify the casket, for Capt. Beebe has not only had a great deal of experience with Pheasants in captivity in the New York Zoological Park, but he has travelled for many months in eastern Asia, exploring the haunts of the wild birds, and has spent another six months in studying the collections of skins in the Museums of London, Tring, Paris, and Berlin.

It is to Col. Anthony R. Kuser, of Bernardsville, New Jersey, to whom the volume is dedicated, that we owe this

work, for it was he who suggested that the monograph should be undertaken, and has supported both the exploration and subsequent publication in a most complete manner.

The present volume commences with a short introduction, containing a historical notice and an account of Capt. Beebe's new classification of the group, which is based on the method and order of the moult of the tail-feathers: thus he distinguishes the true Pheasants, including *Gallus*, as a subfamily Phasianinæ by the fact that the moult of the tail proceeds from the outer feathers inwards, while in the case of *Ithagenes* and *Tragopan* which he unites with the Partridges as a subfamily Perdiciinæ, the moult of the rectrices is from the central pair of feathers outwards. In the Argus Pheasant and its allies the moult begins with the third from the central pair and proceeds inwards and outwards, and in the Peafowl with the sixth pair from the centre, and these are regarded as forming a third and a fourth subfamily.

Other sections of the introduction relate to the voice, flight, gait, food, protective colouring and sexual display, and in a final paragraph dealing with the relations to man it is pointed out how much danger there is of these very beautiful but comparatively stupid and easily trapped birds being exterminated, partly by the demands of the plumage trade and partly by the adoption by the Chinese of a meat diet, while up to the period of the outbreak of the war thousands of Pheasants were imported frozen from eastern Asia into western Europe by the game-dealers to satisfy the demands of the epicures of London and Paris.

The present volume deals with the eleven forms of Blood-Partridge (*Ithagenes*), six Tragopans, three Impeyans or Monáls, and three Eared Pheasants.

The accounts given of each species or subspecies are very complete, and where the author has had opportunities of seeing the birds in their native wilds full of suggestive observations. On the whole Capt. Beebe is very restrained in the recognition and multiplication of subspecies, but we notice he adheres to the distinctness of his *Ithagenes cruentus*

affinis of Sikkim from *I. c. cruentus* of Nepal, notwithstanding the protests of Mr. Baker (Ibis, 1915, p. 124).

We would add one other criticism. Lady Impey, after whom the Monál or Impeyan Pheasant was named by Latham, was not the wife of the first Governor of Bengal, but of Sir Elijah Impey, the first Chief Justice of Bengal, well known to all students of Anglo-Indian history.

The illustrations in colour are by various English and American artists, and are not only beautiful works of art, but have been most successfully reproduced, some of them, alas, in Berlin! For eight of the plates Mr. G. E. Lodge is responsible, for six Mr. Thorburn, for four Mr. Grönvold, and for one the American artist, Mr. C. R. Knight.

The homes and feeding-grounds, and in some cases the nests and eggs of the various species are illustrated with a series of fine photographs, all taken by the author during his travels and beautifully reproduced by photogravure. There are also a series of maps to show the distribution of the species of each genus. We can only conclude this brief and inadequate notice by congratulating Capt. Beebe on having produced a magnificent work of art as well as a most valuable contribution to our knowledge of one of the most resplendent families of birds. We look forward with pleasant anticipation to the appearance of the other three volumes.

Dwight on the Junco.

[The geographical distribution of colour and of other variable characters in the genus *Junco*: a new aspect of specific and subspecific values. By Jonathan Dwight, M.D. Bull. Amer. Mus. N. H. xxxviii. 1918, pp. 269-309; 3 col. pls., 5 maps.]

This is an important paper which should be studied by all systematic ornithologists, since in it Dr. Dwight endeavours to define more clearly what we mean by a subspecies as opposed to a species. It is also a plea for more consideration before adding to the growing number of new names. As he truly says, "The intensive search for differences has greatly

exaggerated their importance, and true perspective of values is often completely lost, so that, with vision narrowed to seek only differences, nothing can be seen except a variation to be named."

Briefly Dr. Dwight endeavours to show that instead of accepting intergradation as a guide by which to separate species from subspecies, it should be recognized that species should be characterized by qualitative and subspecies by quantitative characters.

In illustration of his views Dr. Dwight takes the genus *Junco*, an American group of the Fringillidæ, whose breeding range is confined to the Hudsonian and Canadian faunal zones corresponding to the coniferous forests of the north and the higher elevations along the mountain ranges reaching as far south as the volcanic peaks of Costa Rica. These birds are exceedingly common at lower elevations during the winter, but Dr. Dwight's studies have been almost entirely confined to birds obtained during the breeding-season. By a careful consideration of the geographical distribution of the chief colour-characteristics of each group, he arrives at his conclusions as to the taxonomy of the genus, recognizing nine distinct species with a number of subspecies.

A certain number of individual birds which do not fit exactly into any of his species, but which combine the characters of both in varying proportions, he regards as hybrids; these of course are not common, and occur only occasionally at the junction of the breeding ranges of the contributing species.

Though perhaps not accepting all Dr. Dwight's views in their entirety, we are quite at one with him in confining differential characters of subspecies to those which are quantitative, and regarding qualitative characters as of specific value. In this way our nomenclature will give us a far better view of relationship than by lumping together large numbers of quite strongly differentiated forms under one specific heading merely because they

happen to occupy different geographical breeding ranges. In other words, we must recognize representative geographical species as well as representative geographical subspecies.

The comprehension of Dr. Dwight's paper by those not specially familiar with the birds of this genus is greatly facilitated by the series of coloured figures of the birds, showing very clearly the colour-differences of the different species and subspecies.

Many other interesting points in the paper cannot be here referred to, but all workers in systematic ornithology should consult the paper for themselves.

Ewart and Miss Mackenzie on the King Penguin.

[The moulting of the King Penguin (*Aptenodytes patagonica*). By Professor J. Cossar Ewart, F.R.S., and Dorothy Mackenzie, F.S.Z.S. Trans. R. Soc. Edin. lii. 1917, pp. 115-132, pls. 1-11.]

The Zoological Gardens in Edinburgh were fortunate enough to obtain a consignment of four King Penguins, two adult and two young, from South Georgia early in 1914, and others have reached them since. The observations and discussion of the moult contained in the paper with the title quoted were made on these birds, the observations chiefly by Miss Mackenzie, whose daily notes for the ten days between August 17 and 27, during which the moult was completed, are given *in extenso*, together with a series of photographs taken each day. The moult resembles that of a mammal rather than a bird, as the old feathers come off in patches or lumps, and during this period the birds never enter the water. These, together with other valuable observations on the behaviour of the King Penguin in captivity, are detailed in this interesting paper.

Gladstone's Microphotographs of feathers.

[The photographic analysis of a feather. By John S. Gladstone, F.Z.S.; pp. 1-13, pls. i.-ix. London (Sotheran), 1918. Sm. 4to.]

Mr. Gladstone has expanded the paper he wrote for

'The Ibis' of April last and republished it with six additional plates of photographs prepared by himself to illustrate the structure and morphology of feathers. As the illustrations of feather-structure in text-books are usually drawings and often quite diagrammatic, Mr. Gladstone hopes that his photographs, which have been taken with great skill and reproduced very successfully, will be useful to students and others interested in ornithology. The text is little more than a full explanation of the various photographs.

Grinnell's recent papers.

[The subspecies of the Mountain Chickadee. By Joseph Grinnell. Univ. Cal. Publ. Zool. xvii. 1918, pp. 505-515; 3 text-figs.]

[Seven new or noteworthy birds from east-central California. By Joseph Grinnell. Condor, xx. 1918, pp. 86-90.]

[The name of the American Barn-Swallow. Id. *ibid.* p. 92.]

The first of these papers contains a revision of the subspecies of the Mountain-Tit or Chickadee of western North America (*Penthestes gambeli*). The typical race is found in the main range of the Rocky Mountains and does not reach California, where it is replaced by three shorter-tailed races—*P. g. abbreviatus* in the higher mountains of central and northern California, *P. g. ingoensis* in the mountains of eastern California bordering on Nevada, and *P. g. baileyæ* in the mountains of southern California; of these three, the first two named are here described as new.

The second note informs us of the occurrence of seven new or very unusual bird-records in California, two of which are here described as new subspecies—*Sitta carolinensis tenuissima* and *Hylocichla guttata polionota*, both from Inyo county in the eastern central portion of the State.

The third note is a protest against Mr. Oberholser's action in using *erythrogastris* instead of *erythrogaster* as the specific name of the American Barn-Swallow. Mr. Grinnell points out that though *Hirundo* is undoubtedly feminine in gender, *erythrogaster* is a substantive in apposition and is correct grammatically as well as being the form in which the word was written by the original describer.

Kuroda on new Birds from the far East.

[On one new genus and three new species of Birds from Corea and Tsushima. By Nagamichi Kuroda. *Tori* (The Aves). Published by the Ornithological Society of Japan, Tokio. No. 5, 1917, pp. 1-6, pl. vi.]

This short paper, printed partly in English and partly in Japanese, contains a description of a Sheldrake for which Mr. Kuroda considers it necessary to propose a new generic and specific name:—*Pseudotadorna cristata*. The type and only specimen was obtained on the Naktung river in Corea, and a photograph of it is reproduced.

There is no doubt that this is the same bird as that figured in the 'Proceedings of the Zoological Society' (1890, pl. i.). This specimen was obtained near Vladivostok and was sent to Dr. P. L. Selater, who regarded it as a hybrid between *Tadorna casarca* and *Querquedula falcata*. We understand from Lord Rothschild and Dr. Hartert, who directed our attention to the plate in the Proceedings, that it is undoubtedly a new form of duck and not a hybrid, as Mr. Kuroda has since found evidence of other examples of the same duck occurring in Corea and other parts of Asia. It is a remarkable discovery and a strikingly distinct form characterized by a long black nuchal crest, a brown back and belly narrowly vermiculated with white lines, and a large patch of white on the wing formed by the coverts.

The other new subspecies are *Parus major quelpartensis* from Quelpart Island, which lies to the south of Corea, and *Zosterops palpebrosa ijimæ* from southern Corea, Quelpart and Tsushima Islands. Of the last-named species the author now recognizes six Japanese and Corean forms differing chiefly in the shape and size of the bill. Both the new subspecies are figured in colour on plate vi.

Mathews on the Birds of Australia.

[The Birds of Australia. By Gregory M. Mathews. Vol. vii. pt. ii. pp. 113-216, pls. 335-342. London (Witherby), May 1918. 4to.]

The Kingfishers are a most distinct and interesting group of Birds, both in appearance and habits, consequently in

the life-histories of the Australian species compiled by Mr. Mathews we find much that will attract the attention of the reader and possibly be new to him, especially when coupled with admirable pictures.

But far the most important section in this part of the author's work is his dissertation on the genus *Halcyon*, as limited by Sharpe in the British Museum Catalogue, vol. xvii., to which so many of the Australian forms belong. He desires to perform for this what Miller in America has done for the *Alcedininae*, though much difficulty has been caused by former splitting and recombining what now must be split anew.

The type is shown to be *Alcedo senegalensis* of Swainson, 1821, who separated *Halcyon* from *Alcedo*.

In 1827 Lesson proposed the generic names *Syma*, *Melidora*, and *Todirhamphus*, though his *Alecyon* (*rectius Halcyon*) 1830 for *Alcedo* L. was of course preoccupied, and there was no necessity to reduce the titles to subgenera. After 1848 Kaup, Bonaparte, Reichenbach and Cabanis & Heine created further genera, valid or invalid; and then in 1869 G. R. Gray started an era of recombination, which culminated in the somewhat inconsistent work of Sharpe.

Mr. Mathews makes the following decisions:—

1. That *Entomothera* should be removed to the *Alcedininae*.
2. That the Australian Kingfishers show so little affinity to the African that we cannot keep them under *Halcyon*.

3. He accepts as genera

<i>Syma</i>	for	<i>torotoro</i> .
<i>Chelicutia</i>	„	<i>chelicuti</i> .
<i>Catihalcyon</i>	„	<i>coromanda</i> .
<i>Todirhamphus</i>	„	
<i>Cyanalcyon</i>	„	<i>pyrropygius</i> .
<i>Sauropatis</i>	„	<i>sancta</i> and <i>sordida</i> .
<i>Actenoides</i>	„	the <i>hombroni</i> group.
<i>Caridagrus</i>	„	the <i>concretus</i> group.
<i>Uralcyon</i>	„	<i>sylvia</i> .

4. He proposes as new genera

<i>Dacelalcyon</i>	for	<i>confusus</i> , sp. n.
<i>Halcyonopa</i>	„	the <i>dryas</i> group.
<i>Chelicutona</i>	„	<i>albiventris</i> and <i>leucocephala</i> .
<i>Plesialcyon</i>	„	<i>smyrnensis</i> , <i>cyaneiventris</i> , and <i>gularis</i> .
<i>Nutchera</i>	„	<i>badia</i> .
<i>Cecilia</i>	„	<i>pileata</i> .
<i>Antisyma</i>	„	<i>australiana</i> .
<i>Hyposyma</i>	„	<i>cinnamomina</i> .
<i>Lazulena</i>	„	<i>macleayi</i> group (= <i>Cyanalcyon</i> Cab. & Heine, nec Bp.).
<i>Dilazula</i>	„	the <i>nigrocyanea</i> group.
<i>Dilazulena</i>	„	<i>winchelli</i> .
<i>Melanalcyon</i>	„	<i>funebri</i> .
<i>Todalcyon</i>	„	the <i>tutus</i> group.

5. And as a new subgenus

Leucalcyon for *saurophaga*.

We cannot in our limited space discuss the many subspecies proposed or cancelled, which each reader must study for himself; but must notice that *Edquista* is proposed as a new genus for *Tanysiptera carolinæ*, when the author is discussing *Uralcyon*.

The part concludes with the single Australian species of Bee-eater, where Mr. Mathews prefers *Cosmærops* to *Merops*, distinguishing the two genera and also *Urica*. He suggests, however, a much closer examination of the whole family before arriving at certainty.

Robinson on hybrid Ducks.

[On two abnormal specimens of Ducks in the collection of the Zoological Survey of India. By Herbert C. Robinson, M.B.O.U. Rec. Indian Mus. Calcutta, xv. pt. 1, 1918, pp. 47-48, pl. iii.]

Mr. Robinson describes and figures a Duck shot in Assam and now preserved in the Indian Museum at Calcutta which he believes to be a hybrid, *Eunetta falcata* × *Chaulelasmus*

streperus. He also mentions another specimen also preserved in the Indian Museum, and described by Mr. W. L. Selater (P. Z. S. 1891, p. 313) as a hybrid Mallard \times Gadwall. This latter, which he also figures, he believes to be *Anas boschas* \times *Querquedula crecca* rather than the previously-named combination.

Wiglesworth on the Little Owl.

[The Little Owl (*Athene noctua*) in Somerset. By J. Wiglesworth, M.D. Proc. Somerset Arch. and Nat. Hist. Soc. lxiii. 1917, pp. 152-161; map.]

Dr. Wiglesworth has put together with great care and detail the records of the occurrence and spread of the Little Owl in Somerset. Except for two stray records in 1834 and 1878, the invasion commenced in 1907, when an example was shot at Tickenham between Bristol and Yatton in the north of the county. The following year it turned up at Pensford, also in the north of the county, as observed by Mr. Leyborne Popham, and here it has become thoroughly established and now breeds regularly. It is quite evident that the bird entered the county from the north, as its most western extension—Minehead—was not reached till 1916.

Dr. Wiglesworth also discusses the economics of the Little Owl, and appears to conclude that the benefits it confers by the destruction of mice and insects outweigh the harm in killing occasional young game- and other birds. A neat map of the county with the places where the Little Owl has occurred marked with dates greatly facilitates an appreciation of this workmanlike little paper.

South African Journal of Natural History.

[The South African Journal of Natural History. Vol. i. no. 1, 1918.]

We have recently received a copy of this new journal, which is the official organ of the newly constituted South African Biological Society lately formed by the amalgamation of the South African Ornithologists' Union and the Transvaal Biological Society.

The former of these two societies was founded in 1904, and has issued twenty-two numbers of its Journal and three of its Bulletin. Owing to the war the Union has lost a number of its members and it became increasingly difficult to carry on the journal; Mr. Haagner, therefore, who has been the leading spirit of the Union since its foundation, proposed to join with the Transvaal Biological Society, which had also been in existence for some years, in forming a new and stronger society with a wider scope to advance the study of biology and natural history in South Africa. This was effected in June 1916, and the first number of the new journal is now before us. It consists of 122 pages and is illustrated with 6 plates in black and white; it is edited by Messrs. A. K. Haagner, I. B. Pole Evans, and Claude Fuller.

Among papers dealing with ornithological subjects is one by Lieut. C. G. Finch-Davies, M.B.O.U., on birds collected and observed in the two districts of Okanjande and Outjo of the new South-west African Protectorate. But few English have collected in this former German colony since the times of Andersson and Eriksson, whose work indeed was completed before the German annexation, but a certain number of new forms have been described by Reichenow and other German naturalists. Mr. Finch-Davies' list contains the names of 147 species, two of which appear to be new to the South African fauna—*Francolinus hartlaubi* (about which, however, see Selater, Bull. B. O. C. xxxvii. 1917, p. 46) and *Vinago calva nudirostris*. Another interesting bird which was found abundantly was the curious *Lanioturdus torquatus* of very uncertain affinities, but which is almost certainly not a Flycatcher. It would be most interesting to have an example for anatomical examination.

Mr. Swynnerton sends some stray notes on the habits of Nightjars, asking why they settle on the ground and why they have so noiseless a flight. He has also recently come across a large flock of Pelicans (*Pelecanus roseus*) near Chirinda in Southern Rhodesia, a very long distance away from the sea or a large body of water—an unusual occurrence.

The third bird-paper is by Mr. R. Godfrey and relates

only to the Thrushes and Chats of the basin of the Buffalo river, and especially to the Pirie bush in the eastern part of Cape Colony.

There are many other articles of considerable interest in other branches of natural history well worth the attention of our readers, and we must congratulate Mr. Haagner and his associate editors on their great success in starting this new society, and wish it and its journal a long and prosperous existence.

List of other Ornithological Publications received.

- American Bird-House Journal. (Vol. iii. No. 1, 1918.)
 Archivum Melitense. (Vol. iii. 1-4, 1918.)
 Auk. (Vol. xxxv. No. 3, 1918.)
 Avicultural Magazine. (Third Series, Vol. ix. Nos. 9-10, 1918.)
 Austral Avian Record. (Vol. iii. No. 6, 1918.)
 British Birds. (Vol. xii. Nos. 1-4, 1918.)
 Condor. (Vol. xx. Nos. 3-4, 1918.)
 Bird-Lore. (Vol. xx. Nos. 3-4, 1918.)
 Bird-Notes. (Third Series, Vol. i. Nos. 1-8, 1918.)
 El Hornero. (Tomo i. No. 2, 1918.)
 Emu. (Vol. xvii. pt. 4, 1918.)
 Irish Naturalist. (Vol. xvii. Nos. 6-7, 1918.)
 Journ. Bombay N. H. Soc. (Vol. xxv. No. 4.)
 Rev. Française d'Orn. (Nos. 108-109, 1918.)
 Scottish Naturalist. (No. 78, 1918.)
 South Australian Ornithologist. (Vol. iii. pts. 5-6, 1918.)
-

XXXV.—*Letters, Extracts, and Notes.*

Colonel Tytler's Collection of Birds.

SIR,—Readers of 'The Ibis' will be interested to learn that after a long eclipse the well-known collection of birds formed by the late Colonel R. C. Tytler, C.M.Z.S., has come to light again.

This collection, well known by repute through the writings of Hume and Beavan to all students of Indian Ornithology, was originally housed in Simla by its collector and owner at his residence called "Bonnie Moon."